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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE “Cold Weather Tips for Pets”

As temperatures drop this winter season, pets too will be feeling the winter chill. That is why the San Bernardino County Animal Care and Control Program would like to remind pet owners to be extra watchful of their pets. The following guidelines will help protect your pets, and keep them safe and alive when the mercury dips this winter.

1. During a cold spell, bring pets inside if possible. If pets must stay outside, make sure they have proper shelter from the cold, wind, rain, and snow.
2. Keep cats inside. Outdoors, cats can freeze, become lost, stolen, injured or killed. Cats who are allowed to stray are exposed to infectious diseases, including rabies, from other cats, dogs and wildlife.
3. Never let your dog off the leash on snow or ice, especially during a snowfall —dogs can lose their scent and easily become lost. More dogs are lost during the winter than during any other season, so make sure yours always wears ID tags.
4. Thoroughly wipe off your dog's legs and stomach when he comes in out of the sleet, snow or ice. He can ingest salt, antifreeze or other potentially dangerous chemicals while licking his paws and his paw pads may also bleed from snow or encrusted ice.
5. Never shave your dog down to the skin in winter, as a longer coat will provide more warmth. When you bathe your dog in the colder months, be sure to completely dry him before taking him out for a walk. Own a short-haired breed? Consider getting him a coat or sweater with a high collar or turtleneck with coverage from the base of the tail to the belly.
6. Never leave your dog or cat alone in a car during cold weather. A car can act as a refrigerator in the winter, and they can freeze to death.
7. Puppies do not tolerate the cold as well as adult dogs, and may be difficult to housebreak during the winter. If your puppy appears to be sensitive to the weather, you may opt to paper-train him inside. If your dog is sensitive to the cold due to age, illness or breed type, take him outdoors only to relieve himself.

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8. Does your dog spend a lot of time engaged in outdoor activities? Increase his food supply, especially protein, to keep him—and his fur—in tip-top shape.

9. Antifreeze is a lethal poison for dogs and cats. Be sure to thoroughly clean up any spills from your vehicle, and consider using products that contain propylene glycol rather than ethylene glycol.

10. Make sure your pets have a warm place to sleep, off the floor and away from all drafts –preferably inside. A cozy dog or cat bed with a warm blanket or pillow is always a perfect must for your pets.

For more information on keeping your pets and animals safe during the winter season, please call the San Bernardino County Animal Care and Control Program at (800) 472-5609, or visit their website at www.sbcounty.gov/acc.

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